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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/727,857	12/01/2000	Ganesh Chandra Deka	14075	4263

7590

03/12/2003

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EXAMINER

PRATT, CHRISTOPHER C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1771

6

DATE MAILED: 03/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Mail

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/727,857

Applicant(s)

DEKA ET AL.

Examiner

Christopher C Pratt

Art Unit

1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendments and accompanying remarks filed 12/27/02 have been entered and carefully considered. Applicant's amendment is found to overcome the 112 indefinite rejection of claim 2. Despite this advance, the amendments are not found to patently distinguish the claims over the prior art and Applicant's arguments are not found persuasive of patentability for reasons set forth herein below.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informalities: Please change the word "to" to "of." Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

4. Claims 1, 3, 5-11, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chen et al (6395957), as set forth in the previous action.

Applicant has amended the claims to specify that the nonwoven web is inherently wettable or treated to be hydrophilic. Chen's nonwoven web is hydrophilic (col. 28, lines 6-8).

With respect to newly added claim 14, Chen teaches the microfibers to be made wettable (col. 38, lines 6-8).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. Claims 2, 4, 12-13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al (6395957).

Chen teaches the use of fibers having a denier less than 9 (col. 38, lines 56-60). This suggests that microfibers of any diameters may be used; however, as applicant points out, Chen only specifically mentions a denier as low as 1. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to utilize fibers having an average diameter of .5 microns. The skilled artisan would have been motivated to utilize smaller denier fibers by the desire to increase softness to the wearer and increase the wicking ability of the fiber layer.

Applicant argues that the macroscopic openings in Chen would lead the skilled artisan away from using microfibers. However, the passage applicant refers to (col. 5, lines 1-30) describes an alternative embodiment wherein a nonwoven web having holes cut therein is used instead of an aqueous slurry of fibers. This teaching has no bearing on the selection of fibers sizes.

With respect to newly added claim 15, Chen teaches the microfibers to be made wettable (col. 38, lines 6-8).

With respect to newly added claims 12-13, Chen teaches applying a charge to the fibers (col. 36, lines 39-40), but fails to specify the type of charge. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to utilize a negative charge.

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Such a modification would be motivated by the desire to enhance the fluid attracting properties of the fibers.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher Pratt whose telephone number is 703-305-6559. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 7 am to 4 pm.

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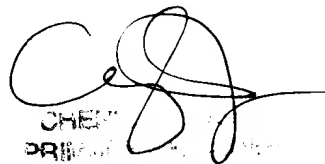
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If attempts to reach the examiner are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on 703-308-2414. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



Christopher C. Pratt
March 9, 2003



CHEP
PRATT